

THE RELIGIOUS WORLD

WHAT THE CHURCH FOLK ARE THINKING ABOUT AND DOING.

By WILLIAM T. ELLIS.

HOW RELIGION GROWS.

The International Sunday School Lesson. Truth is of interest to most persons only in its present relations. None but a few rare souls care for truth in the abstract, and dissociated from time and place. Even historical truth has its chief value as it is linked to the present. The reason for the weekly study of the Sunday school lesson by 5,000,000 of persons is not the desire to acquire a certain amount of historical data so much as it is to obtain motive power for current conduct, and light upon contemporary problems. The life depicted in the old Book is needed as a help for the life that is lived in this year 1909. For three months the Sunday schools have been working in the Book of Acts, considering the beginnings of Christianity. Now, at the end of the quarter, they pause for a backward look.

The story unfolded in these nine chapters is the story of an expanding church. At once the observing reader is struck by the parallel between this ancient narrative and present conditions in some mission lands. A perfectly proper as well as an eminently interesting method of presenting the underlying truths of the quarter's lessons by a frank contemplation of modern missionary growth, ever keeping in mind, of course, this first missionary story.

THE ROMANCE OF KOREA. A mere handful of inconceivable persons held the foreground in the opening of this story. The faith-filled company of disciples was very small. They were like the apparently negligible missionary force that has dared to go up against entrenched error in many lands. Yet as a result of their character and teaching a multitude of others were influenced in the succeeding ten years, and the little church grew like a snowball, even as it has grown in the past dozen years in Korea.

SOME WONDERS OF MISSIONS. The conspicuous event in the early church was Pentecost, a spiritual stirring block to the materialism of the world. Simply because "spiritual things are spiritually discerned," they can find no parallel or rational explanation for this supernatural event. The Pentecost of the church. Just so recent events in India, China, and Korea have staggered observers. The first equipment of a strong, growing church must be a profound and memorable spiritual experience.

There have been in the growing Christian community of Northern India such manifestations of the presence of the Divine Spirit as are almost too strange to be told to Occidental ears. I heard Bishop Warner, Methodist Episcopal bishop of India, narrating some experiences in the India revival to great congregations at Ocean Grove last summer. In conversation with him afterward, I asked why he had not described certain phases of the revival about which we had talked together in India. He frankly admitted that the American churches were scarcely ready to hear such testimony; their incredulity would hinder the effect of his message, so he had to meet with milk, rather than with meat.

It is in solid, material, unimaginative Manchuria there is at present in progress a revival like unto nothing which the Western world knows. Whole villages are gripped by a spiritual power; strong men fall prostrate and writhing, confessing their sins and crying for mercy. Christians are being baptized with a consciousness of peace and joy which sends them gladly out to neighboring villages as evangelists of their faith. Of like fashion, and even more extensive, was the revival that began to sweep over Korea two years ago, purifying the native church, causing men to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, and confounding skeptics everywhere.

It is possible, of course, to be a Christian outside of the church, but it is both difficult and dangerous to try the experiment. Inside the wicket gate is instruction, fellowship, protection, and guidance.

Nobody minds walking a difficult path in order to reach a great destination. And the narrow way is the only way which leads to life—full, free, joyous, and abundant life.

The narrow way affords scope for the enlargement of all one's best powers.

Earth's real "good society" is to be found pursuing the narrow way.

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NEWS AND NOTES. A conference of representatives of the Young Men's Christian Associations of Canada and the Eastern States was recently held in Troy, N. Y., to consider work by American Christians in behalf of young men in foreign lands. Dr. Wei-Ching Yen, secretary of the Imperial Chinese Legation at Washington, was one of the speakers.

One of the largest and most representative gatherings of Southern men ever assembled in the name of religion was the Laymen's Missionary Convention of the Southern Presbyterian Church, at Birmingham, last month. Eleven hundred and thirty-seven delegates registered, and a brilliant array of speakers from many parts of the country presented addresses of America's international religious relations. As an immediate outcome of the convention, about \$60,000 was given spontaneously for the immediate needs of the denomination on the foreign field. Delegation work by laymen throughout the churches was provided for, and a systematic effort undertaken to insure the lifting of the Southern Presbyterian Church's gifts to foreign missions to a standard of \$4 a member every year.

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All gates to growth and greatness are entered at some cost. No one can enter the gate that leads to life except by stooping. Narrow though the wicket gate of entrance upon the Christian life may be, it is entered most easily by those who are determined to stop nowhere which they are leading.

After all has been said and written about "success," it is not actually true that the greatest of all doors of opportunity is the open wicket gate that leads to the life eternal?

The way of God is plain, yet not easy, for it is only they who can stand tests by the wayside who are fitted for God's companionship.

There is room in the strait and narrow way for the largest life and experience.

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Whereas the very half-mark of spirituality is to be better than one's previous best self—to be content with nothing less than the highest degree of perfection attainable. No man ever set out to be as good as his own highest capabilities, worse than his own highest capabilities. In the town of Morality the standards are ever broadening and lowering, and always variable. Whereas whoever enters the Celestial City (and Bunyan evidently meant the wicket gate to represent church membership) has constantly before him a high and fixed standard, the example of the Master.

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VISITS ARE PLANNED

Bishop Harding Announces His April Series.

WILL ADDRESS BROTHERHOOD

Treasurer of Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society Notes Falling Off in Contributions from Washington Diocese, Which is Accounted For in Calls Upon Churches.

Bishop Harding's proposed visitations for April are as follows: Friday, April 2, 7:30 p. m., Epiphany Chapel. Palm Sunday, April 4, 11 a. m., Epiphany Chapel; 4 p. m., St. Thomas Church; 7:30 p. m., St. John's Church, Georgetown. Monday, April 5, 7:30 p. m., Grace Church. Tuesday, April 6, 7:30 p. m., St. Mary's Chapel. Wednesday, April 7, 7:30 p. m., St. Luke's Church. Good Friday, April 8, 7:30 p. m., Emmanuel Church, Anacostia. Easter Day, April 11, 11 a. m., St. Paul's Church; 7:30 p. m., Church of the Good Shepherd. First Sunday after Easter, April 12, 11 a. m., St. Paul's Church, Rock Creek; 7:30 p. m., Church of the Ascension. Friday, April 23, 7:30 p. m., St. George's Chapel. Second Sunday after Easter, April 25, 11 a. m., St. Columba's Chapel; 7:30 p. m., St. Mark's Church. Saturday, April 26, 7:30 p. m., St. John's Chapel. Wednesday, April 28, 7:30 p. m., Calvary Chapel. Thursday, April 29, 7:30 p. m., St. Monica's Chapel. Friday, April 30, 7:30 p. m., St. James' Church.

The next general meeting of the local assembly of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, in the Diocese of Washington, will be held in St. Andrew's parish hall, corner Fourteenth and Corcoran streets northwest, Monday evening, March 15, at 8 o'clock. The address will be delivered by the Bishop of Washington. Bishop Harding will also deliver a paper of importance and interest to every member of the brotherhood in this diocese.

The regular monthly meeting of the Junior Assembly of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew will be held at St. Michael and All Angels Church, Twenty-second street and Virginia avenue, Monday evening, March 22. It is expected the speaker of the evening will be the Rev. Sidney Goodman, of Ascension Church, Atlantic City. Mr. Goodman has gained a reputation for himself as a forceful and convincing speaker, particularly to men and boys. He is carrying on an extensive work in Atlantic City that is attracting the attention of churches of other dioceses. Mr. Goodman will also deliver the address at the midday service at Trinity on Tuesday, March 23.

Next week's preachers at the midday Lenten services in Trinity Church, corner Third and C streets northwest, are to be as follows: March 15, Rev. W. J. Cox, Grace Church, Philadelphia; March 16, Rev. W. J. Cox, Grace Church, Philadelphia; March 17, Rev. W. J. Cox, Grace Church, Philadelphia; March 18, Rev. W. J. Cox, Grace Church, Philadelphia; March 19, Rev. W. J. Cox, Grace Church, Philadelphia; March 20, Rev. W. J. Cox, Grace Church, Philadelphia; March 21, Rev. W. J. Cox, Grace Church, Philadelphia; March 22, Rev. W. J. Cox, Grace Church, Philadelphia; March 23, Rev. W. J. Cox, Grace Church, Philadelphia; March 24, Rev. W. J. Cox, Grace Church, Philadelphia; March 25, Rev. W. J. Cox, Grace Church, Philadelphia; March 26, Rev. W. J. Cox, Grace Church, Philadelphia; March 27, Rev. W. J. Cox, Grace Church, Philadelphia; March 28, Rev. W. J. Cox, Grace Church, Philadelphia; March 29, Rev. W. J. Cox, Grace Church, Philadelphia; March 30, Rev. W. J. Cox, Grace Church, Philadelphia; March 31, Rev. W. J. Cox, Grace Church, Philadelphia.

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